

Nothing to Fear

"The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm 27:1

If you were to ask me what I am afraid of, my immediate response would be "spiders." I don't like their long, spindly legs, I don't like the hair-thin webs they leave around my house, and I especially don't like when they crawl across my face in the middle of the night. However, when I seriously consider the impending threat of a spider attack, I know there is no real danger. I seldom see spiders, and, when I do, they are generally not life-threateningly poisonous. Even when I know there is no danger, I am still afraid of spiders. The more I try to rationalize my fear, the more I think that "spiders" is a weak answer.

In the psalm for our reading, David boldly sings, "Whom shall I fear?" The remark is powerful coming from David, who had good reasons to be afraid. As a shepherd, David grappled with lions and bears to protect his herds. As a young man, David evaded King Saul's numerous attempts on his life. Even in his reign as king, David was surrounded by enemies. These threats posed real, imminent danger for David, yet he responded by saying, "Whom shall I fear?" Even though David faced frightening physical harm, he placed his trust in God.

Trust in God. You have probably heard it many times—the phrase "In God we trust" even appears on our currency! But the way David describes this God we are to trust is truly unique. David does not describe a scene in which God destroyed his enemies with fire or disaster; rather, the terms David used to describe God direct our attention to God's love for us.

First, we see the word "LORD." English translators use the name "LORD" to represent the Hebrew name "YHWH" or "Yahweh." When David used the name "YHWH," he referred to the "Lord of the Covenant" or the "God who keeps his promises," namely, the promise to send a Savior. When we read the word "LORD," we remember the God who has kept his promise and has saved us from the fear of eternal death. We can trust the God who keeps his promises and delivers us from all fear (Ps 34:4).

David also calls the LORD his "light." In Psalm 19, David called God's word a "light for my path," meaning that God's word illuminates the Way to heaven, that is, Jesus (John 14:6). In John 9:5 Jesus calls himself the "light of the world," meaning that he is the world's salvation.

Finally, David calls God the "stronghold of my life." David trusted God to save him from sin and spiritual harm, and to preserve his faith throughout his life. He also then trusted God to guard and protect him against all physical harm from his enemies.

Although King David was pressured by enemies on all sides, he rejoiced because no threat of bodily harm could detract from his joy in his Savior. God offers us that same protection. Paul encourages us: "[Nothing] will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans

8:39). No matter what fears assail us, we have the hope of heaven and the peace of God's forgiveness to carry us through life to eternity.

What are you afraid of? If spiders aren't high on your list, maybe death, failure, embarrassment, loss, loneliness, uncertainty, rejection, or judgment are. Satan works every day to shake our trust in God. But, when you think about it, what is there to fear, really? The God of love is with us. Who or what can stand against that? With the Stronghold at your side, boldly answer: "Nothing."

Prayer:

God, my LORD, my Stronghold, you have given me the hope of heaven through your Son. Take away my fears and make me strong to trust your unshakable word. Amen.

For Further Reading:

Romans 8:18-39

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